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GRASS-WARBLEDERS OF THE
GENUS CISTICOLA

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DESCRIPTIONS OF SEVEN NEW AFRICAN GRASS-
WARBLERS OF THE GENUS *CISTICOLA*

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This paper is the fifteenth dealing with the results of the Smithsonian African Expedition, under the direction of Col. Theodore Roosevelt. It embraces descriptions of seven new species and subspecies of birds, four of which were discovered by members of the expedition.

All of the measurements submitted in this paper are in millimeters; and the designation of colors conforms to Mr. Robert Ridgway's "Nomenclature of Colors," 1886.

***CISTICOLA PRINIOIDES KILIMENSIS*, new subspecies**

Mount Kilimanjaro Grass-Warbler

Cisticola prinioides OBERHOLSER, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. 28, 1905, p. 902 ("Six specimens, from Mount Kilimanjaro, at 5,000, 6,000, and 8,000 feet, April 3 to 11, 1888.")—SjÖSTEDT, Wiss. Ergeb. Schwed. Zool. Exped. Kilimandjaro, III, Vögel, 1908, p. 149 (Kilimanjaro).

Type-specimen.—Adult male. Cat. No. 118025, U. S. N. M. Collected at Maranu, altitude of 5,000 feet, on Mount Kilimanjaro, German East Africa, April 3, 1888, by Dr. W. L. Abbott.

Characters.—Most closely related to *Cisticola prinioides prinioides* Neumann, from Mau, British East Africa, but differs in having the upper parts less uniformly colored, and the under parts darker, without a well-defined whitish area along the middle of the abdomen. The rufous crown is more distinctly spotted with dark centers to the feathers. The mantle is grayer, with blacker centers to the feathers.

Measurements of type (adult male).—Length (of skin), 147; wing, 58; tail, 69; culmen, 13; tarsus, 24.

Material.—Six specimens, collected by Dr. W. L. Abbott, on Mount Kilimanjaro, at the altitudes of 5,000, 6,000, and 8,000 feet.

Remarks.—This form may be distinguished from *Cisticola prinioides neumanni* (Hartert), from Mount Kenia, British East Africa, by its paler, more grayish, and more spotted upper parts; and the

under surfaces are browner, less grayish, in *kilimensis* than in *neumanni*.

CISTICOLA SUBRUFICAPILLA ÆQUATORIALIS, new subspecies

Equatorial Grass-Warbler

Type-specimen.—Adult male. Cat. No. 214431, U. S. N. M. Collected at Lake Naivasha, altitude 6,350 feet, British East Africa, July 22, 1909, by Edgar A. Mearns. Original number, 16355.

Characters.—Much larger than *Cisticola subruficapilla subruficapilla* (A. Smith); coloration darker; median stripes on feathers of upper parts broader and blacker; tail and outer aspect of wings less rufescent.

Description.—Pileum and cervix pale sepia, the feathers centrally striped with blackish brown; lores white or (sometimes) rusty white; no light stripe above eye; ear-coverts grayish brown; back, rump, and upper tail-coverts dark hair brown, the feathers of the mantle with conspicuous brownish-black centers; wings externally dark brown, with outer webs edged with dull cinnamon; tail above dark reddish brown, obscurely fasciated, all but the central pair of rectrices subterminally banded with black and tipped with pale drab; chin and upper throat white; middle of chest and abdomen white, washed with cream-buff; sides brownish gray washed with buff; thighs clay color; axillars and bend of wing creamy white; under wing-coverts and inner border of quills pinkish buff; crissum cream-buff; under surface of tail pale drab (sometimes rusty), the feathers subterminally crossed by a complete black band about five millimeters in width. Iris yellowish brown; bill blackish brown above and flesh color below; feet and claws light brown.

Measurements of type (adult male).—Length (of skin), 140; wing, 61; tail, 58; exposed culmen (chord), 13.5; tarsus, 24.

Average measurements of eight adult males.—Wing, 66.1; tail, 58.3; culmen (chord), 13.4; tarsus, 24.5.

Average measurements of four adult females.—Wing, 57; tail, 49.3; culmen (chord), 12.3; tarsus, 23.6.

Measurements of one adult male topotype of Cisticola subruficapilla subruficapilla.—Wing, 52; tail, 50; culmen (chord), 11.2; tarsus, 20.

Material.—Twelve adults from Juja Farm (Athi River), Heatley's Farm (Kamiti), Southern N'Guaso Nyiro River (Sotik District), Oljoro-o-Nyon River, Lake Naivasha, Gilgil, Laikipia, and Guaso Nyiro River, all in British East Africa.

CISTICOLA SUBRUFICAPILLA BOREA, new subspecies

Northern Grass-Warbler

Type-specimen.—Adult male. Cat. No. 217127, U. S. N. M. Collected at "Rhino Camp,"¹ on the Bahr el Jebel, Lado Enclave, Africa, January 30, 1910, by Edgar A. Mearns. Original number 18244.

Characters.—Similar to *Cisticola subruficapilla aequatorialis* Mearns, but smaller and much paler in coloration.

Description.—Pileum and cervix pale bistre, the feathers centrally striped with dark brown; lores white; ear-coverts and sides of neck drab; back, rump, and upper tail-coverts light hair brown, the feathers of the mantle with dark brown centers; wings dark brown, with fulvous edging to the outer webs of the primaries, and drab edging to the outer webs of the secondaries and wing-coverts; tail broccoli brown, obscurely fasciated, all but the central pair of feathers crossed by a subterminal black band and narrowly tipped with écu drab; chin, throat, and middle of abdomen white; sides pale grayish drab washed with cream-buff; thighs pale brownish gray; axillars and lining of wings creamy white; under wing-coverts and inner border of quills pale pinkish buff; under tail-coverts soiled white; under surface of tail écu drab, the feathers subterminally crossed by a complete black band about four millimeters in width. Bill (in dry skin) dark brown above and flesh color below; feet and claws light brown.

Measurements of type (adult male.)—Length (of skin), 132; wing, 62; tail, 54; culmen (chord), 13.5; tarsus, 25.5.

Measurements of adult male (Cat. No. 217129, Bahr el Jebel at Gondokoro, Uganda, February 25, 1910).—Wing, 64; tail, 58; culmen (chord), 13; tarsus, 25.

CISTICOLA ALLENI, new species

Allen's Grass-Warbler

Type-specimen.—Adult male. Cat. No. 56127, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Collected on the Meru River, British East Africa, August 12, 1909, by Dr. Glover M. Allen.

Characters.—This species appears to be most closely related to the *Cisticola subruficapilla* group, from which it differs in the relatively stouter, more curved bill, pallid grayish coloration, cinereous outer aspect of the primaries, and white tips to the tail-feathers.

¹ "Rhino Camp" is on the left (west) bank of the Nile ("Bahr el Jebel"), about 15 miles north of Wadelai, latitude 2° 55' north.

Description.—Upper parts brownish gray, slightly rufescent on the crown; feathers of mantle and crown centrally striped with dark brown; wing-coverts and quill-feathers dark brown with broad hoary edging; feathers of rump and upper tail-coverts cinereous, with obsolete median dark streaks; rectrices dusky brownish gray, obscurely fasciated, all but the central pair with a broad subterminal band of black and pure white tip; lores and sides of face below eye, white; ear-coverts pale grayish brown; under parts white with a faint tinge of buff across chest and along sides; edge of wing white; under wing-coverts creamy white; inner border of quill-feathers buffy white; under surface of rectrices gray, all but the middle pair crossed by a subterminal black bar seven millimeters in width and broadly tipped with pure white. Bill, in dry specimens, pale brown above, flesh color on mandible and sides of maxilla; feet and claws light brown.

Measurements of type (adult male).—Length (of skin), 115; wing, 63; tail, 57; culmen (chord), 13; tarsus, 23.

Measurements of adult male topotype.—Length, 115; wing, 67; tail, 55; culmen (chord), 12; tarsus, 24.

Material.—Two adult males, collected by Dr. Glover M. Allen, on the Meru and Guaso Nyiro Rivers, north of Mount Kenia, in British East Africa.

CISTICOLA STRANGEI KAPITENSIS, new subspecies

Kapiti Plains Grass-Warbler

Type-specimen.—Adult male. Cat. No. 213547, U. S. N. M. Collected at Potha, altitude 4250 feet, Kapiti Plains, British East Africa, April 29, 1909, by Edgar A. Mearns. Original number, 15644.

Characters.—Most closely related to *Cisticola strangei pachyrhyncha* (Heuglin),¹ from the "forest-region of Bongo, in Central Africa," from which it differs in being much paler and more grayish. *Cisticola argentea* Reichenow,² which is apparently a subspecies of *Cisticola strangei* (Fraser),³ is larger, grayer, and with more grayish sides than the present form. The salient differences in three closely related forms of *Cisticola strangei* may be stated as follows:

¹ Ibis, 1869, pp. 130 and 131, in text (new name for *valida* Peters).

² Ornith. Monatsb., Vol. 13, 1905, p. 25.

³ *Drynoica strangei* L. Fraser, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., Pt. II, No. 121, July, 1843, p. 16.

<i>Cisticola strangei strangei</i>	<i>Cisticola strangei pachyrhyncha</i>	<i>Cisticola strangei kapitensis</i>
Pileum prout's brown, the feathers inconspicuously edged with wood brown.	Pileum bistre, without conspicuous edging to the feathers.	Pileum pale brown, the feathers broadly edged with pale grayish clay color.
Nape similar to crown.	Nape similar to crown.	Nape pale clay color, with darker centers to the feathers, contrasting with color of crown and mantle.
Mantle dark brown, the feather edging paler, more yellowish brown.	Mantle darker brown, the feather edging not in strong contrast with the dark centers.	Mantle paler, with broad grayish margins strongly contrasting with the dark centers to the feathers.
Outer surface of wing-quills russet.	Outer surface of wing-quills wood brown.	Outer surface of wing-quills wood brown.
Under surfaces deep yellowish olive-buff.	Under surfaces pale yellowish olive-buff.	Under surfaces buffy white.

Measurements of type (adult male).—Length (of skin), 128; wing, 68; tail, 51; exposed culmen (chord), 13.1; tarsus, 29.

Comparative measurements of adult males:

	Wing	Tail	Exposed culmen	Tarsus
<i>Cisticola strangei strangei</i>	69.0	53.0	13.0	29.0
<i>Cisticola strangei pachyrhyncha</i>	69.0	50.0	13.0	29.0
<i>Cisticola strangei kapitensis</i>	67.6	51.0	13.1	28.5

Material.—Five adult males from British East Africa.

Remarks.—I noted the color of the iris of the type specimen as "pale brownish yellow." On two specimen labels, Mr. G. L. Harrison, Jr., has noted: "Iris light brown; bill dusky; legs and feet flesh color."

CISTICOLA DIFFICILIS, new species

Lakiondu Grass-Warbler

Type-specimen.—Adult female. Cat. No. 56129, Museum of Comparative Zoology. Collected at Lakiondu, north of Mount Kenia, British East Africa, September 7, 1909, by Dr. Glover M. Allen.

Characters.—Similar to *Cisticola sylvia* Reichenow, but striped above and slightly smaller. In general coloration it is not very unlike *Cisticola emini* Reichenow, though striped and more yellowish above and more strongly fulvous below.

Description.—Pileum and cervix plain sepia brown; mantle sepia, the feathers mesially striped with blackish brown; rump and upper tail-coverts rather pale yellowish brown; wings bistre, washed with cinnamon on the outer webs of quills; tail above bistre, showing

faint cross-bars, subterminally banded on all of the feathers with obsolete dusky bars which are black on the under surface, and tipped with grayish drab; lores and supraorbital stripe soiled white; sides of head pale grayish brown; under parts pale grayish brown, whitish on throat and middle of abdomen; thighs broccoli brown; edge of wing white; under wing-coverts buff-yellow; inner webs of quills buffy gray; under side of tail grayish drab, subterminally banded with black (these bands about six millimeters in width on outer rectrices), and broadly tipped with yellowish drab. In the dry skin the ridge of the maxilla is brown, the mandible and sides of maxilla flesh color; feet and claws pale yellowish brown.

Measurements of type (and only specimen).—Length (of skin), 120; wing, 54; tail, 52; culmen (chord), 12.5; tarsus, 21; width of middle tail-feather, 10.

CISTICOLA HYPOXANTHA REICHENOWI, new subspecies

Reichenow's Grass-Warbler

Cisticola hypoxantha OBERHOLSER, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. 30, 1906, p. 805.

Type-specimen.—Adult male. Cat. No. 215430, U. S. N. M. Collected at Chagamwe (sea-level), British East Africa, November 30, 1909, by Edgar A. Mearns. Original number, 17702.

Characters.—Similar to *Cisticola hypoxantha hypoxantha* Hartlaub from the upper Nile Valley, but paler, and less distinctly streaked above.¹

Measurements of type (adult male).—Length (of skin), 100; wing, 48; tail, 37; exposed culmen (chord), 10.3; tarsus, 20.

Material.—Eight specimens of the present form from Mombasa and Chagamwe, on the coast of British East Africa; five specimens of *Cisticola hypoxantha hypoxantha* Hartlaub from near the type locality (Lake Albert).

Remarks.—Dr. Reichenow, to whom the specimens collected by William Doherty at Mombasa were submitted, considered this form distinct; but in the absence of specimens from the type locality of *Cisticola hypoxantha*, Mr. Oberholser was unwilling to name the Mombasa bird, which I now take pleasure in naming for Dr. Anton Reichenow.

¹ For a detailed description of this form see Oberholser, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. 30, June 4, 1906, p. 806.